



## The New Zealand Psychological Society

*Te Rōpū Mātai Hinengaro o Aotearoa*

### **Media Release**

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**For immediate release-**

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### **Attention: Health and Social Issues Reporters**

The New Zealand Psychological Society (NZPsS) welcomes the Privacy Commissioner's report on the "Inquiry into the Ministry of Social Development's collection of individual client-level data from NGOs." The Commissioner shares the concerns of the NZPsS and other agencies that this policy risks undermining trust, the very foundation upon which service users access psychological and other support services.

Quentin Abraham, President of the New Zealand Psychological Society agrees with the Privacy Commissioner that the policy rolled out by the Ministry of Social Development is inconsistent with the principles of the Privacy Act. He said, "this policy does not put the interests of service users first and in failing to do so does not meet the standard of care individuals and their whānau expect and are entitled to." Mr Abraham also noted that psychologist members of the NZPsS and other service providers have been placed in an untenable ethical position by this policy and will welcome the Privacy Commissioner's findings.

"We hope the Ministry of Social Development will take heed of the Privacy Commissioner's recommendations to protect the right to privacy of some of our most vulnerable citizens, to avoid creating barriers to accessing lifesaving services and to continue to make use of existing anonymised information to help guide decision making."

## **About the New Zealand Psychological Society**

The New Zealand Psychological Society is the largest professional association for psychologists in New Zealand. It has over 1700 members and subscribers and aims to improve individual and community wellbeing by representing, promoting and advancing the scientific discipline and excellence in the practice of psychology.